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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
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INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI 6116

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 001903

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FOR NEA/FO; NEA/ARP; S/CT

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TAGS: PREL PARM IR AE

SUBJECT: UAE RESPONSE TO IRANIAN EFFORT TO REASSURE GCC
ABOUT ITS NUCLEAR PROGRAM

Classified By: Classified by DCM Martin Quinn for reasons 1.4 (b) and (e).

¶1. (U) On May 6, UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed (AbZ) spoke to the press at the conclusion of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) consultative summit in Riyadh. According to WAM, the UAE's official news agency, when asked if the GCC had received any assurances from Iran that its nuclear program would be strictly for peaceful purposes, AbZ responded that Iran's nuclear program is "worrisome not only for us, but for the entire world." He stated that Iran's offerings were insufficient, noting, "Iran has commitments to honor to the international community and to the IAEA, as well as moral commitments to its neighbors." AbZ called for Iran to deal with the GCC in "full transparency" with respect to its nuclear program. According to local press reports, Iran tried to reassure its Gulf Arab neighbors that have expressed concern about the safety of Iran's nuclear plant at Bushehr.

"There is nothing to worry about, we have spent a lot of money on its (environmental) safety and the security of the plant," according to an Iranian foreign ministry spokesman quoted in the May 8 English daily "Gulf News" (source AFP).

¶2. (U) WAM further reported AbZ stating: "We (GCC members) do appreciate Iran's efforts to reassure its neighbors. Yet, to ensure security and stability for future generations, and to preclude and potential hazards to the environment, Iran has to offer more assurances--and we are trying to get them." AbZ noted that although Iran and the GCC are bound by political, economic, social, and historic ties, there are points of discontent in the relationship, this program included. But, despite these contentions, Iran is considered a Muslim neighbor and the GCC is obligated to "do our best to improve these relations." AbZ stated that the GCC would not try to mediate between Iran and the West over nuclear issues. The Gulf News previously reported that during an April visit to Kuwait AbZ stated that the concern over Iran's nuclear program must not push us towards "any option other than a peaceful solution."

3.(C) Note: Septel forthcoming on AbZ May 7 debrief on Riyadh GCC Consultative Summit for Ambassador and S/CT A/S Hank Crumpton.

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